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NSC FOR KARA MCDONALD

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TAGS: PREL UNSC KPAL IS LE
SUBJECT: GUIDANCE FOR JANUARY 30 UNSC CONSULTATIONS ON THE
MIDDLE EAST

REF: DE OTALVARO/PHEE E-MAIL OF 18 JAN 08

¶1. (SBU) USUN is instructed to draw from the points in paras. 2-9 below in making its statement at the January 30 UNSC debate on the Middle East. Please select the point in para. 2 that describes the outcome of the discussion on the PRST on Gaza, and follow with the rest of the points in para. 3 et. seq. For additional details on the four tracks for the political process launched at Annapolis, the Lebanon tribunal, and the elections in Lebanon, refer to ref e-mail.

¶2. (SBU) Begin Points: If we achieve required changes to PRST and can join consensus:

"Mr. President, I want to thank you for your leadership during the discussions on the situation in the Middle East last week, which resulted in a Presidential Statement upon which we could all agree. It is clear that all on this Council share a deep concern over the situation in Gaza. We are concerned about the ongoing and unacceptable firing of rockets and mortars into Israel from Gaza. We are also concerned about the economic and humanitarian situation in Gaza, recognizing the importance of continued humanitarian access and assistance, and welcoming Israel's commitment to minimize the impact of its actions on innocent civilians there."

If other states do not agree with us on PRST and we have to break consensus on it:

"We regret that the Council was unable to reach a consensus on a Presidential Statement on the Middle East. The draft statement was unbalanced, placing demands on Israel while failing to call on Hamas to cease its acts of provocation and take the steps necessary to achieve genuine progress towards realizing the vision of two democratic states, Israel and Palestine, living side-by-side in peace and security."

¶3. (SBU) "Terror groups in Gaza continue to target innocent Israeli citizens with rocket fire on a daily basis. This rocket fire is unacceptable and it must stop. Hamas, having violently and illegitimately seized power in Gaza last June, bears responsibility for putting an end to this and other terror activities in and emanating from Gaza, which pose a danger to Israel and undermine the aspirations of the Palestinian people and the efforts of their legitimate government. Most recently, Hamas orchestrated attacks on the border between Gaza and Egypt, resulting in tens of thousands of Gazans surging into Egypt in an uncontrolled manner, destabilizing the region by potentially facilitating access for terrorists into

Egypt and the transfer of armaments into Gaza.

¶4. (SBU) Clearly Hamas' actions are at odds with the Palestinian people's aspirations for freedom and statehood. A Palestinian state will never be born of terror and violence. These aspirations can only be realized through negotiations and peaceful means. We call upon Hamas to end the daily rocket attacks on Israel from Gaza and relinquish its illegitimate control of Gaza to the Palestinian Authority, under the legitimate leadership of President Abbas and Prime Minister Fayyad. In the meantime, we will not abandon the people of Gaza. We will continue to provide humanitarian aid to help meet the basic needs of Gazans, and we continue to view Gaza as an integral part of a future Palestinian state.

¶5. (SBU) These troubling developments will not discourage the United States' commitment to President Bush's vision of two states living side-by-side in peace and security, and should not discourage the Council from its commitment to the long-term goal of establishing a Palestinian state that is peaceful, democratic, and viable.

¶6. (SBU) Israel and the Palestinians are forging ahead with the political process launched at Annapolis, and the United States and other members of this Council and the Quartet must continue to support their efforts. As President Bush said in Jerusalem, we are working to support progress on four tracks.

¶7. (SBU) Mr. President, we hope that the momentum from reaching an agreement on Roadmap implementation in Annapolis, and achieving financial support for Palestinian institution building and economic reform in Paris, will continue to build and give way to the creation of a Palestinian state that is a homeland for the Palestinian people, just as Israel is a homeland for the Jewish people.

¶8. (SBU) Turning to Lebanon, the U.S. strongly condemns the terrorist bombing in Beirut last week that killed Lebanese Internal Security Forces Captain Wissam Eid and many other Lebanese. We extend our condolences to the families of the innocent Lebanese killed in this brutal attack. This bombing, the latest in a series of terrorist attacks targeting those who are working to secure Lebanon's independence and sovereignty, is a part of the continuing assault on Lebanon's institutions.

¶9. (SBU) Like the previous assassinations and bombings, this was an attack on Lebanon's democracy and on all those working to secure Lebanon's unity, independence, and prosperity. The United States will not falter in our support for the democratically-elected Lebanese government. We appreciate the UN's efforts to rapidly stand up the Special Tribunal for Lebanon, which will hold accountable those responsible for the assassination of Former Prime Minister Hariri and other related crimes. We urge members of the Council and UN member states to provide financial assistance to allow the Tribunal to continue its important work. Finally, we renew our call for the immediate election of a new President in accordance with Lebanon's constitution and call upon Syria, Iran, and their allies end their interference in and obstruction of Lebanon's democratic process.

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